DISNEY COLLECTION
DOES NOT CIRCULATE

A Newsletter for the Horticulture Division of Walt Disney World

Every Bloomin' Thing

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BRINGING A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE

Less than 10° from the equator is the small Indonesian island of Java, formerly the Netherland's East Indies, with rich and beautiful flora. Many of our most attractive conservatory plants come from there, and appropriately so does the supervisor who decorates our interiors with those plants--Irus Michel. It seems most everyone already knows Irus, he really needs no recognition, but well deserves it.

His responsibilities range from potted plants and displays outdoors for conventions, stage shows and even Center Street at Christmas to permanent interior plants for offices, pavilions and the participants. "Everyone is my friend," says Irus referring to the many different divisions and people he is required to work with. His position is a very busy one, but he enjoys the pace. He added, "The more I cuss, the more I get done." And from our conversation I gathered he must get quite a bit done.

Horticulture is not his life long occupation; he spent 18 years as a hide inspector. Soon after beginning this work, World War II broke out and he served in the army for the Netherlands for 5 years. Following the war, he moved his family (both parents, wife and four daughters) to Holland to continue hide inspecting. In 1956, his work brought him to America during an unstable period for the hide business.

Irus became aware of a job opening at the greenhouses at Winterthur, known worldwide for its horticulture legacy created by Henry F. duPont. Irus insists that at the time he didn't even know what a greenhouse was, and in his straightforward manner he told that to Mr. duPont, who hired him for his honesty. Irus said he chose this line of work because it is not boring. "Nature is not boring because you never finish learning." In fact, this was just the beginning of his education of plants. One of Mr. duPont's favorite roles was that of "head gardener", and according to Irus he was very particular about the way things were done. It was he who gave Irus the insight into the art of decorating and sent Irus to Longwood Gardens to learn the science of Horticulture.

In 1971, after his oldest daughter moved to Orlando to work at WALT DISNEY WORLD, and for the next two years, Irus and his family visited here for their vacation. "WALT DISNEY WORLD has the respect of all of Indonesia," says Irus. He had it in his heart that he would work here once he left Winterthur and he believes it was his willpower that made it happen.

In 1974 after all of his girls had finished school, he left Delaware and applied for a job here. He was hired as a gardener and began work at the Polynesian. A year later he became a lead of the greenhouses and later Assistant Supervisor. In two years he was Supervisor at the Contemporary Resort Hotel and two years after that, he was back at the Polynesian as Supervisor. As the original supervisor for the interior crew, Irus states this is where his interests lie. He enjoys the challenge of design and the opportunity to work in various locations which is required of this position.

You never know where you will see Irus next. But one thing is sure, whenever you see him, he will be putting out 100% effort and because of this, he feels good about his work.

STATISTICS ARE REVEALING

During 1983, Horticultural Pest Control took 329 various samples from suspected problem areas in our landscapes. The samples were taken from soil and plant materials and then forwarded to the appropriate agency for identification or analysis. Of those samples sent, 144 went to plant pathology, 66 to nematology, 29 to the Division of Plant Industries for insect identification and 90 samples were tested in our own facilities for soluble salts and pH. The results are divided into 3 basic areas: annuals, ornamentals and turf.

Annuals and ornamentals were consistent in their results. The most common pathogens were pythium, fusarium and rhizoctonia. The most common nematode was the root-knot; and the soil samples were consistently low in pH and soluble salts.

The turf samples came back with pythium as the most common pathogen. All varieties of turf are subject to nematode damage, but not all areas on property are affected. The nematodes occurring most often include lance, spiral, ring, stunt, stubby root, sting, root-knot, sheath, and awl and dagger. Soluble salt and pH readings on soil samples from turf areas were also low (on the average).

With proper diagnosis of disease and cultural related problems, Horticultural Pest Control can provide valuable assistance through better understanding of our problems and better control through the use of the most effective methods.

Tim Flowers, Pest Control Operator
Phil Flanagan, Supervisor
Horticultural Pest Control

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CAST ACTIVITIES IS FOR YOU

February 29th marked the first meeting of 1984 for the Cast Activities Board of Advisors. As your representative, it is my responsibility to keep you up to date with our current as well as future activities.

In order to serve you best, I need to know what your interests are and what programs you would like to see offered. Please send any suggestions you may have to my attention at the WDW Grounds Maintenance office by inter-office mail.

From Film Festivals to Summer Softball, there will be something for everyone in this year's activities. Be sure to watch "Eyes and Ears" and "Every Bloomin' Thing" for information about upcoming events.

Jane Underwood
Magic Kingdom

DER PFLANTZEN IN DEUTSCHLAND

Pflantzen, or plants, play an important role in the lives of the German people. I recently spent 3 weeks vacationing in Germany, traveling through most of the country, taking in the historic buildings, beautiful views and dark beer.

Most of the large cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt, or Munich, have been rebuilt since being reduced to rubble during World War II. An important part of this restoration is the planting of street trees and the care of existing ones. Most of the street trees are deciduous, sycamores and lindens are the most prevalent and are usually planted bare root in the winter. Because of this, along with strong wind storms, much emphasis is placed on staking. The large posts they use (many times 3 or 4 per tree), also serve as a deterrent to any stray BMW's that might threaten the tree.

In the home landscapes, there was one element common to American landscapes that is seldom seen in Germany--foundation plantings. Hedges, if anything, are only used to surround and segregate the relatively small yards. Usually a variety of species, instead of mass plantings of one kind of plant, adorned the inner portion of the lot. Deciduous fruit trees, such as apple or cherry trees, are quite common also.

Interior plants are very popular in the home or business, and many are the same common foliage plants that we are accustomed to. Potted flowering crops, especially cyclamen and primroses frequently brightened up the windows. Camphor trees and date palms looked strangely out of place indoors to a Floridian, but they seemed to do well.

There isn't much annual color in the landscape during the winter, with the exception of an occasional bed of pansies in protected locations. However, instead of leaving a bed or window box empty, cut spruce branches are placed in them. Even green is colorful during a German winter.

Aufwiedersehen!

Chip Drew, Supervisor
Tree Farm/Nursery

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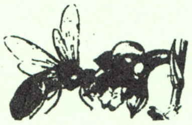
BLACK & DECKER WITH WINGS



By definition, a carpenter builds and repairs wooden structures, but the carpenter bee, Xylocopa virginica, does quite the opposite.

In the spring, the carpenter bee bores holes into sound wood for the purpose of laying eggs. Once the tunnel is completed, or an old tunnel reconditioned, a single egg is laid at one end. Next to the egg the female places a mass of pollen and regurgitated nectar which will serve as larval food. She seals off this area and continues up the tunnel with the same process, usually laying six to eight eggs per tunnel. In five to seven weeks, the egg will become an adult which greatly resembles a bumble bee without yellow stripes. The abdomen of a carpenter bee is solid black.

The adult female has the capabilities to sting but is rarely known to do so. Instead, it is the unsightly combination of sawdust and waste material left behind around the outside of buildings that makes them a pest. Areas where carpenter bees have done their work include Fort Wilderness and Lake Buena Vista. Aside from being destructive pests, carpenter bees are also highly beneficial as good pollinators, an important factor that should be considered before they are eliminated from any area.

Ernie Kembro, Supervisor
Structural Pest Control

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DISNEYLAND UPDATE

Spring is finally peeking here again! February was very sunny and void of any rain, which of course makes it hard on our trees. But, we are confident that our irrigation systems can satisfy the thirst of even our large trees. Earlier in the year, we initiated a deep feeding and watering program. I believe we'll see the advantages through the hot forcasted Summer.

Our new Alice project is scheduled to open on Easter. Building is at a high pitch to make this deadline, and everyone is confident that we'll make it. We're even telling the plants to grow faster!

Special thanks to Charlie Cook and Danny Stark. (Charlie Cook - WDW Discovery Island and Danny Stark - DL Pony Farm). Both gave instrumental help in attaining our own swans, here at Disneyland, for the Castle moat. (Previously we had rented swans). The birds are very happy, and have adjusted well to their new home in California.

Ken Inouye, Superintendent
DISNEYLAND

IRRIGATION--ONE OF OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSETS

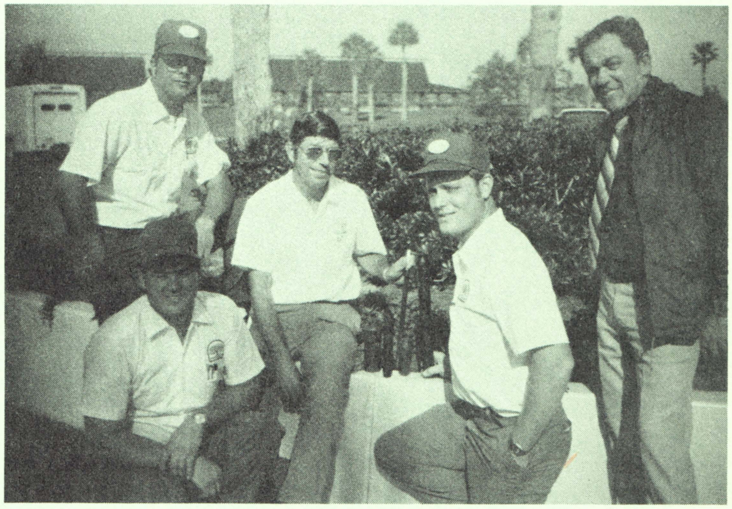
We all know it also takes fertilizer, sunshine, and T.L.C. to make a beautiful landscape, but there is another factor we often take for granted--irrigation.

The irrigation systems throughout the Magic Kingdom and peripheral areas were originally installed in 1971. From 1971 until the present, our irrigation systems have been revamped, modified and generally changed around in many directions to accommodate the many changes in the landscape design. During this period, manufactured irrigation equipment and techniques have also changed with new inventions and developments.

A program is now underway to upgrade our irrigation systems in the Magic Kingdom. As you can imagine, this will be a lengthy and involved project and will be implemented over a 3 to 5 year time span. Ground action has started with the installation of new types of sprinkler heads in several locations. Some of the first areas to be changed include Tom Sawyer's Island, the South Annex of the Contemporary Resort Hotel, the Polynesian, the Tomorrowland Skyway and fireworks island.

It is important for our Irrigation Specialists to keep abreast of all the newly introduced irrigation equipment. This year we have four work seminars which will be attended by Irrigation personnel, including seminars by Toro, Rainbird and Clay-Val, as well as a Horticulture Division Training class which will involve discussions concerning our irrigation systems on the property.

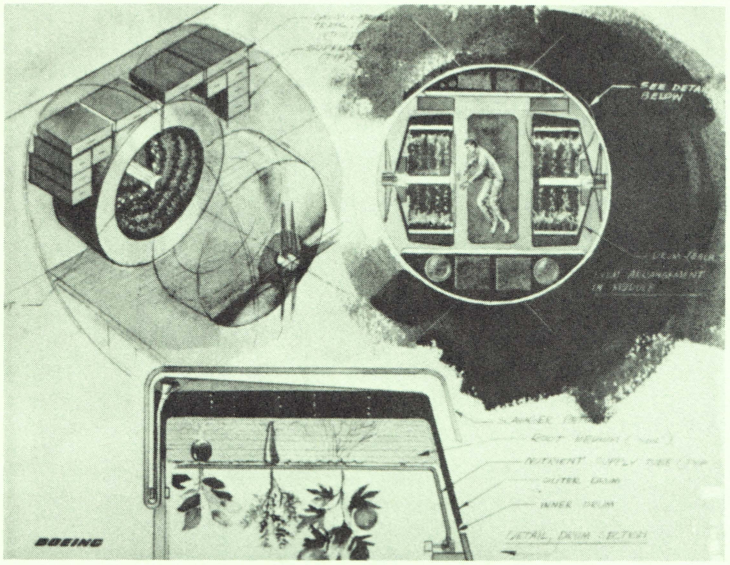
Dave Bargnesi, Supervisor
WALT DISNEY WORLD Irrigation



Of course the success of all our plans depends on the expertise of our irrigation crews. Pictured with several new Toro sprinkler heads is our Magic Kingdom crew (L-R) Terry Moseley, Don Flanery, Mike Martinec (Lead), Jim Presson and Dave Bargnesi.

SPACE AGRICULTURE

To the best of our knowledge, horticulturalists at The Land are the first to have ever grown crops from germination to harvest under rotational stress. The space drums in the Creative Farm at The Land, an experiment in space agriculture, are of great interest to the NASA life sciences advisory board.



Plants do respond to gravity to orient themselves directionally, and some plants have a much stronger gravity response than others. Scientists feel that to grow plants in a microgravity situation will require a substitute force that plants can use for orientation. Rotational force generated by spinning the growing environment is an idea envisioned by other scientists in the aerospace industry (see illustration). The key experiments will have to be done when one of the early space stations give us the opportunity to conduct longer-term agricultural experiments than can be done on the shuttle.

At this point, we know so little about space agriculture that it is very difficult to even speculate. Space agriculture will probably be hydroponics, since it would be too costly to send soil into space. It is also possible that a green plant growing system will be tied into the total space station life support system, since photosynthesizing plants give off oxygen, take up carbon dioxide, and remove waste products from the total environment.

Feasibility studies have shown that for longterm space station habitation, the economics favor on-site production rather than continual resupply. We are developing a working relationship with NASA so that we can continually update our demonstration of space agriculture at The Land.

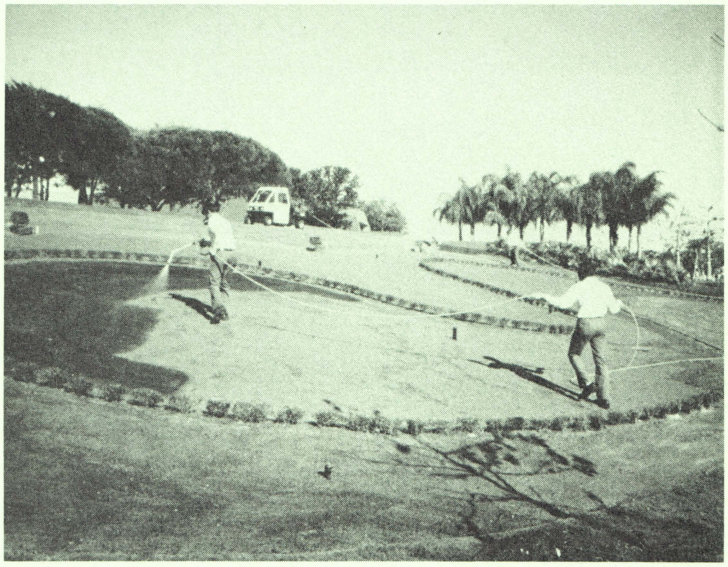
Henry Robitaille, Manager
The Land

HYDRO-SEEDING FOR ANNUAL COLOR

On New Year's Day, we determined that even the ornamental kale on The Land Berm would have to be pulled. Kale is considered to be the most hardy of winter annuals, yet the sub-freezing wind had burnt the foliage and already it was rotting. As the supply of bedding plants in the industry had been nearly exhausted the previous week, the prospects for finding an additional 26,000 annuals for replanting were nil. This predicament led us to a unique solution, direct seeding.

Alyssum (Lobularia maritima) was selected for several reasons: fast germination at a range of temperatures; ability to grow well when seeded at high rates; and availability of appropriate colors. It was determined that four pounds of seed (approximately 6 million), would provide 2 seeds per square inch. At this rate even a modest 50% germination rate would provide the recommended coverage. Two pounds each of Rosie O'Day and Carpet of Snow were used.

After watching the seed run directly through a broadcast spreader while still closed and trying with no success to mix with dry carriers, we decided to apply it by spraying, suspended in solution.



The Pest Control crew at EPCOT Center proceeded to remove the filters from their spray tanks and mix each variety of seed in separate tanks with water, and a soil stabilizing polymer.

As a follow up, irrigation controllers were set up to apply water in short periods many times a day and subsequent liquid fertilizer applications were made. Germination began one week after seeding, and was complete after three weeks. Flowering soon followed and by mid-February we had a good show of color on The Land Berm. Thanks to everyone who helped to make our first hydro-seeding a success.

Barry McKently, Superintendent
EPCOT Center Landscape

Editor: Pamela Boswell
Typist: Deani Pendley

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